REMARKS

This Amendment is fully responsive to the final Office Action dated November 24, 2009, issued in connection with the above-identified application. A request for continued examination (RCE) and a one-month extension of time accompany this Amendment. Claims 1-16 are pending in the present application. With this Amendment, claims 1, 6, 9 and 14 have been amended. No new matter has been introduced by the amendments made to the claims. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 1-16 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regard as the invention.

The Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 6, 9 and 14 to clarify the claims. For example, independent claim 1 has been amended such that the limitation "a block size setting command which informs the electronic apparatus of transmitting information specifying the block size and in which the information specifying the block size is not included" has now been replaced by "a block size setting command which informs the electronic apparatus that information specifying the block size is to be transmitted via the data line without specifying the actual block size via the command and response line." Similar amendments have been made to independent claims 6, 9 and 14. Withdrawal of the rejection to claims 1-16 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 1-16 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Saeki (U.S. Publication No. 2003/0006279, hereafter "Saeki") in view of James et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,006,289, hereafter "James").

The Applicants assert that the combination of Saeki and James fails to disclose or suggest all the features recited in at least independent claims 1, 6, 9 and 14 (as amended). For example, independent claim 1 recites the following features:

"[a]n electronic apparatus comprising:

an interface section that communicates with a host device through a command and response line and a data line, wherein:

a command and a response are transmitted through the command and response line, and data is transmitted through the data line;

the command, the response and the data are transmitted in this order between the electronic apparatus and the host device;

the transmitted data is divided into data blocks with a block size specified by the host device when a length of the data is at least a predetermined length; and

the interface section receives, via the command and response line, a block size setting command which informs the electronic apparatus that information specifying the block size is to be transmitted via the data line without specifying the actual block size via the command and response line, transmits a response acknowledging receipt of the block size setting command via the command and response line after receiving the block size setting command, and then receives the information specifying the block size via the data line after transmitting the response acknowledging receipt of the block size setting command;

a storage section that stores the received information specifying the block size; and

a data buffer that stores data, wherein

when the specified block size is larger than a capacity of the data buffer, the interface section includes error information indicating that the specified block size is larger than the capacity of the data buffer in a response acknowledging receipt of a command different from the block size setting command, and transmits the response including the error information to the host device." (Emphasis added).

The features emphasized above in independent claim 1 are similarly recited in independent claims 6, 9 and 14 (as amended). Additionally, the features emphasized above in independent claim 1 (and similarly recited in independent claims 6, 9 and 14) are fully supported by the Applicant disclosure.

The present invention (as recited in independent claims 1, 6, 9 and 14) is distinguishable from the cited prior art at least with regard to the feature of receiving a block size setting command which informs the electronic apparatus that information specifying the block size is to be transmitted via the data line without specifying the actual block size via the command and response line. That is, with the present invention (as recited in independent claims 1, 6, 9 and 14), an electronic apparatus receives the information specifying the block size at a different timing from the block size setting command; specifically, after receiving the block size setting command, and more specifically, after transmitting a response to the block size setting command. Since the actual information of the block size is transmitted to the electronic

apparatus via the data line separately from the block size setting command, the actual information of the block size can have a large size.

Additionally, the present invention (as recited in independent claims 1, 6, 9 and 14) is further distinguishable from the cited prior art with regard to the use of error information indicating that the specified block size is larger than the capacity of the data buffer. The error information is included in a response to a command different from the block size setting command and is transmitted to the host device in order to solve any problem related to receiving the information specifying the block size at a different timing from the block size setting command.

In the Office Action, although the Examiner relies on a combination of Saeki and James for disclosing or suggesting all the features of independent claims 1, 6, 9 and 14, the Examiner relies primarily on James for disclosing or suggesting the features of the "interface section" recited in independent claim 1(and similarly recited in independent claims 6, 9 and 14), and in particular the feature of receiving a block size setting command.

However, the Applicants assert that James fails to disclose or suggest the features recited in independent claims 1, 6, 9 and 14, as amended.

James discloses that a "readPlus request" for specifying the data block size is transmitted to a target, and the target transmits a response to an initiator to adjust the data block size if the specified data block size is larger than a size supported by the target. The initiator launches a readPlus transaction including the adjusted data block size.

In the Office Action, the Examiner compares the "a block size setting command" of the present invention (as recited in independent claims 1, 6, 9 and 14) to the "READ request" in Fig. 4A of the James. As described in James, the "READ request" is a command for shifting the initiator from an idle state to a negotiating state. That is, the "READ request" in James is not a command for informing the target that information specifying the block size is to be transmitted via the data line, as in the present invention (as recited in independent claims 1, 6, 9 and 14).

In James, although a "read Plus request" is transmitted from the initiator to the target as a command for specifying the data block size, it does not clearly specify that information for specifying data block size is transmitted at a different timing from the "readPlus request."

James also fails to disclose or suggest that error information about the data block size is included in a response, a command or request different from the "readPlus request." Thus, even

if the "readPlus request" in James is interpreted as including "information for specifying data block size," this information is transmitted at the same timing as the "readPlus request." Thus, the information for specifying data block size is not transmitted after (or at a different timing) transmitting the "readPlus request," as in the present invention (as recited in independent claims 1, 6, 9 and 14).

Based on the above discussion, it is clear that the "READ request" and "readPlus request" in James are different from the "block size setting command" of the present invention (as recited in independent claims 1, 6, 9 and 14).

Thus, James fails to disclose or suggest at least the following features recited in independent claims 1, 6, 9 and 14:

1) A block size setting command, which informs the electronic apparatus that information specifying the block size is to be transmitted via the data line, is transmitted from the host device to the electronic apparatus via the command and response line; and then, the information specifying the block size is transmitted separately from the block size setting command via the data line.
2) Error information about the specified block size included in a response to a command different from the block size setting command if the specified block size is larger than a capacity of a buffer.

As noted above, Saeki is not relied on for disclosing or suggesting the features emphasized above in independent claim 1 (and similarly recited in independent claims 6, 9 and 14). Thus, Saeki fails to overcome the deficiencies noted above in James. Accordingly, no combination of Saeki and James would result in, or otherwise render obvious, independent claims 1, 6, 9 and 14. Likewise, no combination of Saeki and James would result in, or otherwise render obvious, claims 2-5, 7, 8, 10-13, 15 and 16 at least by virtue of their respective dependencies from independent claims 1, 6, 9 and 14.

In light of the above, the Applicants submit that all the pending claims are patentable over the prior art of record. The Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections presented in the outstanding Office Action, and pass the present application to issue.

Additionally, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney by telephone to resolve any remaining issues in the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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